

ARCHAEO-ARCHIVISTS* UNITE!

July 24, 2015 Jen Novotny Explore Posts, Finds, Historical Archaeology AO
Curle, archives, Dundurn, Glasgow, Leslie Alcock, Scotland, St Kilda, Traprain Law, WWI

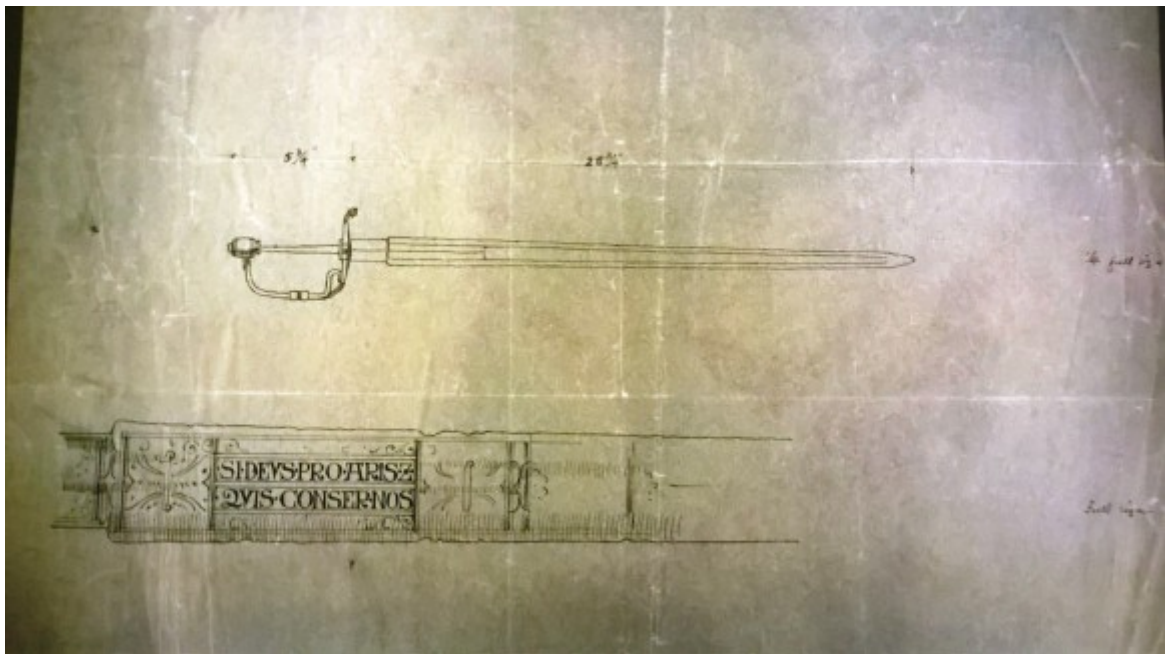
***Archaeolivists? Archivaeologists? Neologise your own preferred term here.**

I am one of four trained archaeologists currently working in the University of Glasgow Archive Services: two as researchers and two who also trained as proper archivists. I would be put out at not being the quirky, cool odd one out if I didn't like my colleagues so much. In fact, the longer I work here, the more interdisciplinary intersections I see, from archaeologist colleagues visiting the archives to do research, to archivist colleagues who do archaeology.

DIGGING IN THE ARCHIVES

For the Day of Archaeology 2015, I want to celebrate some of the particularly archaeological highlights that I have (sometimes literally) stumbled upon in the archival collections at the University of Glasgow.

I particularly like the oversize scrapbook of the Glasgow Archaeological Society. The correspondence and minutes of the society date back to 1866, but items in the scrapbook date to the 17th century.



Noted antiquarian Charles Whitelaw's drawing of a sword found at Cathcart, Glasgow, in the scrapbook of the Glasgow Archaeological Society, (University of Glasgow Archives Reference: DC066/14/1).

The University Archive includes a collection of posters for past events, including lectures like A.O. Curle's 1922 talk on [Traprain Law](#). Curle was not just the excavator of some amazing sites, but also served as Secretary of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland (1908-13), and the

Director of the National Museum of Antiquities (1913-9) – what would become today's National Museum of Scotland – among other posts.

University of Glasgow.

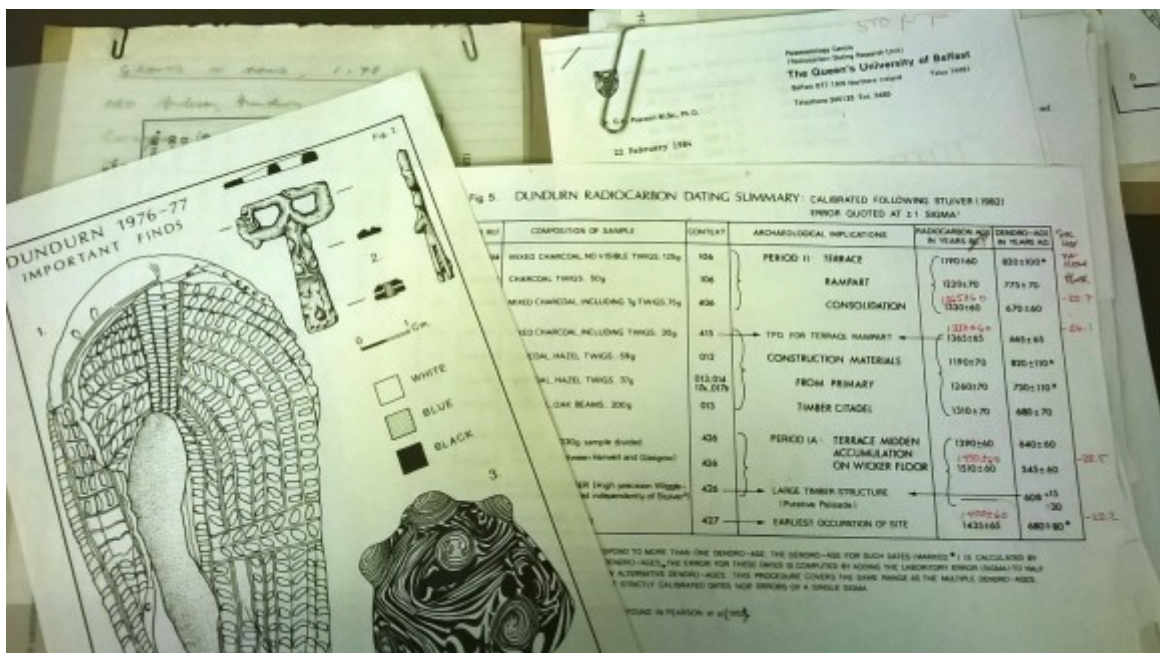
FREE LECTURES

The following Lecture will be delivered in the Lecture Hall of the Botany Buildings, University Avenue, on Thursday, 9th March, 1922, at 7 p.m. by **ALEXANDER O. CURLE, F.S.A. Scot., Edinburgh**

SUBJECT:
“THE EXCAVATIONS AT TRAPRAIN LAW”
(Lantern Illustrations)

The Lecture is open, without ticket, to all interested

Another highlight is the papers of [Leslie Alcock](#), formerly Professor of Archaeology at the University of Glasgow and Honorary Keeper of the Archaeological and Anthropological Collections of the University's [Hunterian Museum](#). Alcock specialised in Early Historic Britain and the University Archives hold records on some of his excavations.



Reports from Alcock's excavations of [Dundurn](#), Perthshire, Scotland

IT GOES TOGETHER LIKE BEER AND ARCHAEOLOGY

In addition to the various records of the day-to-day business of the [University](#), as well as papers of past students and staff, the University of Glasgow Archives is home to the important [business collections](#). My personal favourite is the [Scottish Brewing Archive](#).

It is handy for finds research, like this bottle, uncovered by the [Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot \(SERF\) Project](#), the University of Glasgow's annual field school in Perthshire, Scotland.



WB Thomson Superior Waters Codd bottle

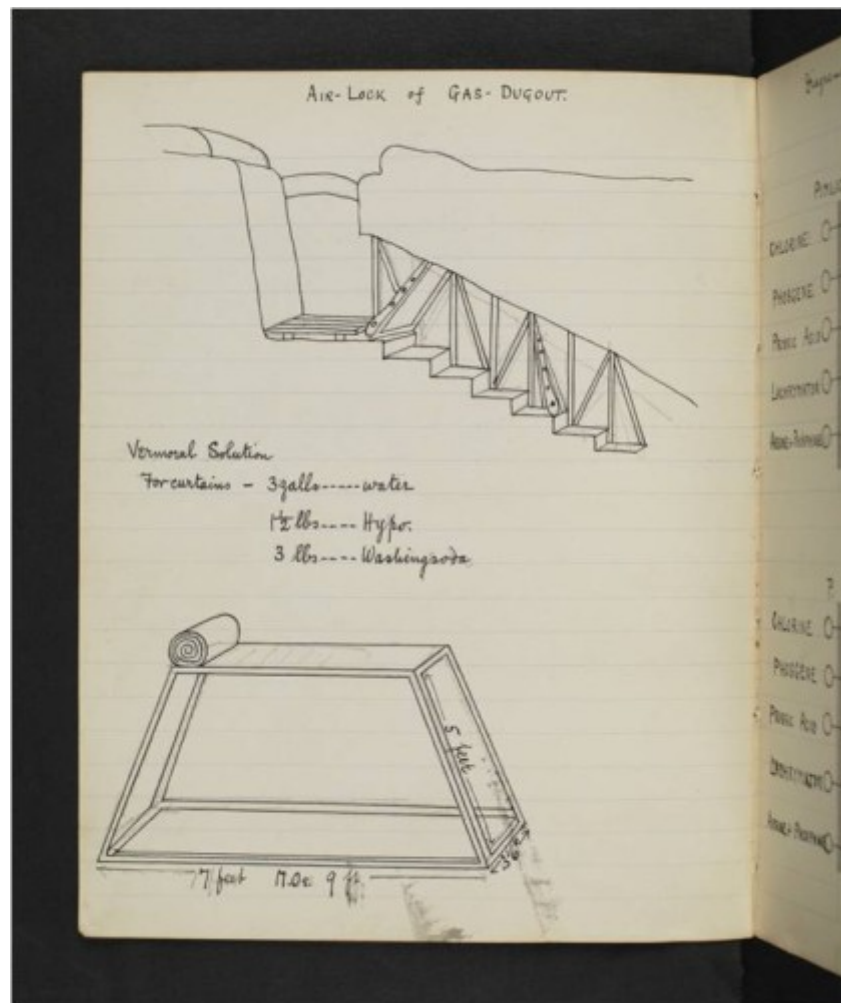
Thanks to the Scottish Brewing Archive (Newsletter No. 7, 1986), I learned that WB Thomson and other brewers struggled during the difficult economic conditions of the First World War: the company was liquidated and ceased to exist early in 1915, with its aerated water and bottling interests being bought out by Perth-based John Craik & Co. Suddenly a seemingly mundane artefact could be linked more widely to dramatic socio-economic events.

Perhaps the promise of discovery is what makes archaeologists and archivists such kindred spirits. In autumn of last year a student cataloguing project unearthed [previously unseen photos of St Kilda](#), much to the delight of archaeologists at the University of Glasgow and the [National Trust for Scotland](#). The photographs were snapped by Thomas Patterson, the first Gardiner Professor of Organic Chemistry at the University of Glasgow, while on holiday in the 1920s. The photos offer a glimpse of life on the island of Hirta before it was evacuated in 1930.



DC431/8/14 The St Kilda Post Office, photograph found in the personal papers of Thomas Patterson, the first Gardiner Professor of Organic Chemistry at the University of Glasgow.

Thus, the University of Glasgow archives are a vibrant source of research for a number of archaeological projects, from ground-breaking (excuse the pun) research into the [history of Glasgow's allotments](#), to the Heritage Lottery Funded project [Digging In](#), which will recreate First World War trenches in Glasgow's Pollok Park.



Using a wealth of archival material like this photograph from the collection of the University of Glasgow Officers Training Corps (DC099/5) and the notebooks of AA Bowman (DC077), Digging In will compare how troops were prepared for trench warfare at home with data gathered by the [Centre for Battlefield Archaeology](#) on excavations of trenches on the Western Front to create a dynamic learning environment in the heart of Glasgow.

So for this year's Day of Archaeology, I am enjoying being an archaeologist in the archives – discovering the past ... just with less dirt.

Jen Novotny is an archaeologist employed as a Research Assistant in History who is based in the Archives at the University of Glasgow. She works on Glasgow University's Great War, a [WWI centenary project](#). Follow the project on Twitter [@GlasgowUniWW1](#) and keep up to date on research via the project [blog](#).